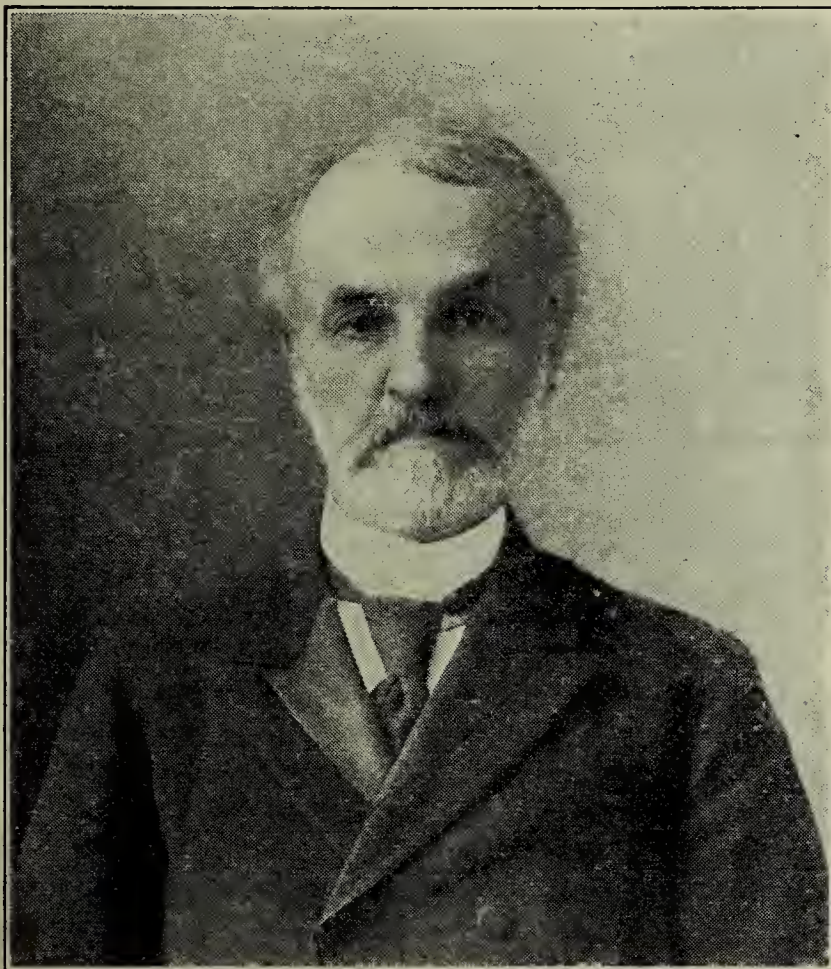
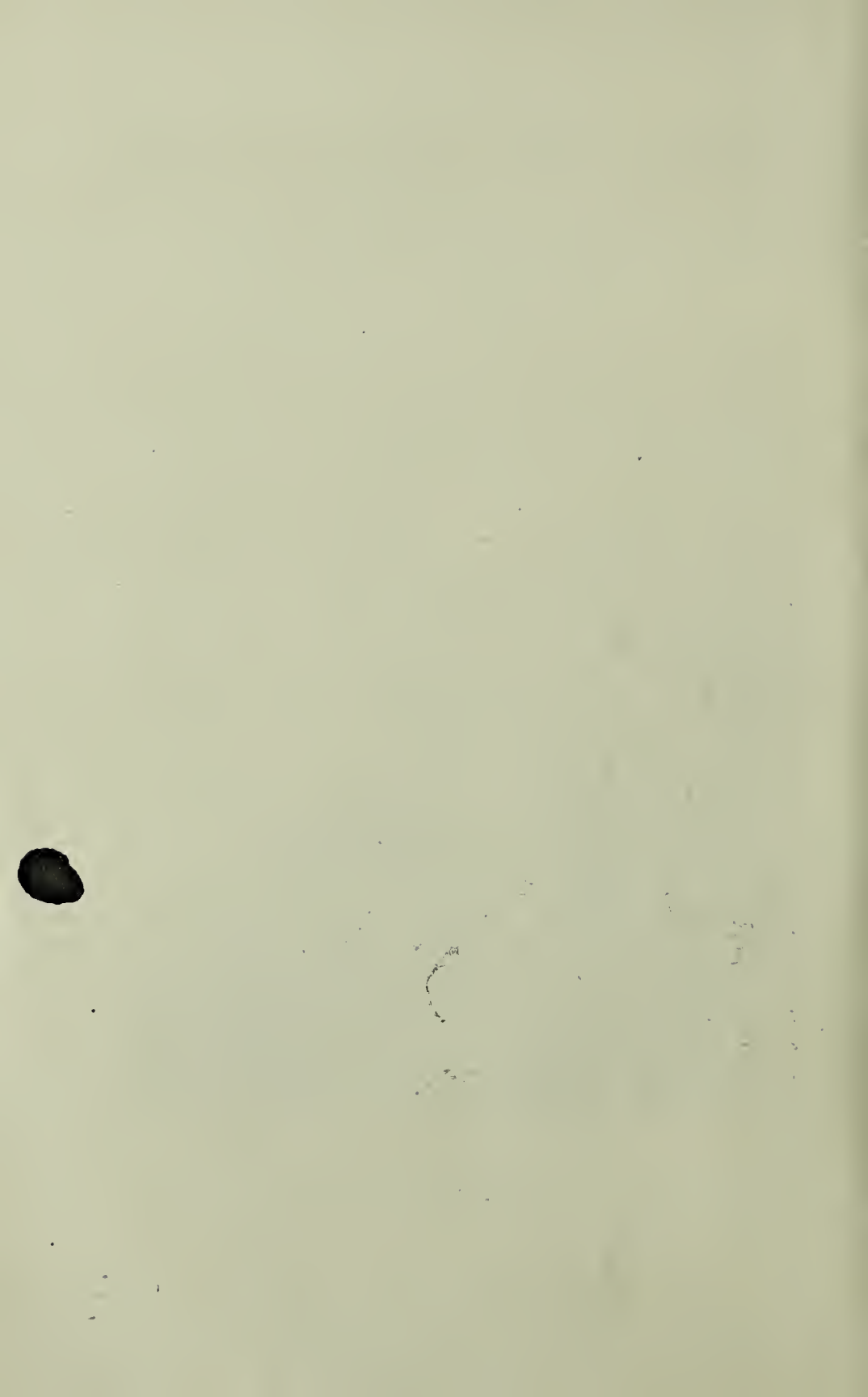


The Progress of a Generation



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The Progress of a Generation.*

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In measuring distances it is well to set stakes and establish points of departure; so in considering the progress of the world,—religious, educational, social, governmental or commercial,—one is enabled to obtain a clearer view by marking off periods of time and comparing the conditions of different dates. In looking back over something more than thirty years of experience in the work of missions and the general advancement of mankind an impressive conception is gained of the rate of the world's progress.

Thirty years ago there was published a tabular exhibit of missionary work which placed the number of communicants in the Protestant missions of the world at about 500,000, the number of pupils in schools of all grades at 450,000, the number of missionaries at 2,300, and the native helpers of all classes at 18,500. A total of \$5,725,000 was raised by all boards and societies.

According to the most recent statistics we find that the present totals show 1,550,729 communicants in mission churches, 1,051,466 pupils in schools, total number of missionaries

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18,682, native helpers of all classes 79,396, while the income from home and foreign sources, is \$20,079,698 per annum.

The number of communicants connected with the Missions of the Presbyterian Board thirty-two years ago was 2,047, the number of missionaries 84, pupils in schools 7,465. This one Board is now raising about a million of dollars each year, and its total membership in mission fields is nearly 45,000. But these figures give only a faint conception of the general advance of Christianity in the world. For while missionary effort is limited, the providence of God controls many agencies, direct and indirect, and the influence of these is so blended that it would be difficult, even if it were necessary or desirable, to trace their separate action and accord to each its proper results.

If we go back thirty years or more for a survey of conditions, what was the general outlook thirty years ago? In our own country the Civil War had but recently closed, and the work of reconstruction had only begun. That conflict had not only brought terrible devastations upon the land, and dotted it over with graves of young and vigorous fellow citizens, but it had left different sections of the country still alienated. Our missionary organizations, Home and Foreign, were greatly crippled. Many of the new States were still undeveloped and ungoverned territories which seemed to need the undivided effort of the Church. Instead of all this we now behold a land at peace from ocean to ocean, with sectional divisions and jealousies removed, with a degree of commercial and agricultural prosperity never before known in any land, with the mission treasuries of all boards and societies free from debt, and all

denominations ready to enter with new zeal upon the conquest of the world for Christ.

Our national domain has by recent events been greatly extended in both hemispheres, and our country, which was almost despised as a factor in world problems, is now recognized as one of the leading forces among the nations. Especially is this true in the direction of international comity and an enlarged philanthropy.

Japan at the period named has indeed been opened to foreign influence, but the work of regeneration had only begun. When I visited Japan, in 1874, the total Protestant Church membership in that country could have been seated in this room, leaving space for as many more. I attended the first Christian funeral ever known in that empire, and heard two of the half-dozen native preachers who had then entered the service. The national energies which were aroused by the Japano-Chinese War had not yet been dreamed of. Japan had not received a constitution. Her treaties with other nations had not been placed upon a high and prosperous basis.

The dawn of progress in China had scarcely yet appeared. The great movement in Africa toward the discovery and development of the interior and unknown regions had not begun. Stanley had not made his trans-continental explorations. The story of the Congo and the true sources of the Nile were yet unknown. Uganda had not uttered that stirring appeal to the churches of Christendom which has wrought such changes in our day, and which out of much tribulation struck the keynote of one of the most wonderful developments of Christian faith and Christian living which the world has seen. Korea was still the Hermit Nation. Roman Catholic Christianity, which

at one time had taken root there, had been well nigh extirpated. Brazil was still an empire, dominated to a large extent by Papal supremacy and intolerance. Mexico had overthrown the Franco-Austrian dominion which had threatened her liberties and her religious welfare, but was yet in an experimental stage, and only the smallest beginnings of progress in free thought and in emancipated faith had been made. No railroads had crossed the American border, and the tide of American immigration and commercial influence had not begun. Spanish tyranny and the death-like paralysis of all progressive movements and influences rested upon the Spanish West Indies, and the corrupt dominion of the Spanish friars held the Philippines tightly in its grasp.

Compared with all this we see to-day in Japan a youthful though a historically ancient nation, stepping to the front rank as a civilized power, with constitutional government, and with military and naval resources of the very first order. Her university education and common school system, her concessions to popular liberty, her skill in statesmanship, her treatment of prisoners taken in battle, the example of her noble Empress in ministering sanitary relief, her hospitals and orphanages and other eleemosynary institutions, have won for her a high place in the respect of all mankind.

Of China, considering its commercial, educational and social conditions and opportunities, Dr. W. A. P. Martin said to me not many days since that in forty years he had never seen that great empire in so favorable an attitude toward the development of Christianity and all civilizing and elevating influences as at the present day. The war with

Japan, and still more the awful tragedies and humiliations of the Celestial nation in the last two years, have been overruled for this result. The bigoted illusions of the Dowager Empress and her court have lost their fatal spell. The great empire has learned a lesson and has already begun to move. Dr. Martin, on his homeward journey, received two telegrams asking him to accept the presidency of Chinese universities, one in Shansi and another in Hupeh. He has accepted the latter, for which he finds special guarantees in the fact that his patron is the well-known Chang Chi Tung, author of that remarkable book, "China's Only Hope." The University of Shansi is to be established under the presidency of another former missionary, Rev. Timothy Richard. A great educational movement has also been started in Southern China.

Korea is now wide open and presents in some respects perhaps the most promising mission field in the world. The brief cablegram which said to Dr. H. N. Allen "Go to Korea," is so fresh in memory after a lapse of eighteen years that it seems only a matter of yesterday.

Cuba, emancipated from the thralldom of Spain, cleansed from unsanitary defilement and the constant development of disease, trained for three years in civil government, schooled in the best methods of education, inspired with true patriotic pride and ambition, thrown wide open to Protestant religious influence, has recently been invested with the independence of a republic.

Porto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines have come under the ægis of our American flag, and are making rapid progress in all directions.

Of the Philippines, Gov. Taft has recently

given an interesting account of the distribution of a thousand American teachers, scattered through five hundred different towns of the archipelago, and given emphasis to his prediction that the rising generation will speak the English tongue. And, although he believes that a long time will be necessary to prepare these islands for self-government, so gigantic and difficult is the task, yet nowhere in the world have steps toward that result been more rapid.

In Africa, the problem of the Congo is solved, and not only Western civilization but Christianity is advancing to the very heart of the continent from the West, while in Uganda and Eastern Soudan, England has conquered a peace, and good government with freedom of religion has been established. Egypt, on the North, and last of all a unified British dominion in the South, have given new assurances of peace in all Eastern Africa, and of the opening up of railroad communication at no distant day from Cairo to Cape Town.

In our Western Hemisphere, Brazil has now joined the array of republics which compass the shores of South America along both oceans.

Mexico seems thoroughly established with good government and a fair measure of religious freedom. A wonderful contrast to the Mexico which some of us still remember!

In the present generation Alaska has been added to our national domain and, in spite of unpromising beginnings and many dark prophecies of failure, has astonished the world. Mission stations now dot the coast even in the extreme north, penetrating far within the frozen gates of the Arctic Ocean. As a proof of the rapidity with which our American Church life in all its manifold de-

velopments spreads over our new possessions, the small cities of Sitka and Juneau are occupied by churches of from five to seven denominations.

Conditions in Europe have wonderfully improved in our generation. Napoleonism has perished from the face of the earth. Protestant Germany has gained a power and prestige never before known on the Continent, and, although the world has Russia yet to reckon with in Europe and the Far East, the progress of international arbitration and other results of the recent Peace compact, proposed by the Czar himself, give fair promise that wars of national jealousy and ambition are to be discredited from this time forth.

But while these geographical and political movements have shown changes for the better, there has been marked advancement in much more important matters. The new forces added to Christian propagandism have greatly advanced in power and influence. Woman's work for woman as a missionary agency had only sprung up within our time, but is now recognized as one of the most spiritual and effective of all the forces which Christianity has developed. In the same period, Young Men's Christian Association work has widened out into a foreign missionary force and is exerting a harmonizing and unifying influence over all the religious interests of the world. It is a special movement of Christianity and good morals among the young men of all creeds and lands, and all races. The Student Volunteer Movement has proved to be not a transient impulse, but a steady and wonderful force. The development of Christian Endeavor Societies, now extending into all lands, has enlisted the young of both sexes in a cru-

sade more sublime and far more truly Christian than those of the Middle Ages.

It is another auspicious fact that our generation has developed, as no other age of the Church has done, the co operation of the laity.

Applied Christianity has ceased to be a function merely of the priestly class; the old pulpits of our fathers have descended in more senses than one much nearer to the level of the pew. The body of the Church has ceased to be a flock and has become an army. The idea now prevails that everybody, old and young, has a work to do. This is true not merely of the multiplied forms of Sabbath-school work, Church work, settlement work, rescue work, etc., but the change pervades all society. It has become fashionable with our great universities to elect lay presidents. Our Board of Missions has chosen a lay Secretary, and he does as much preaching as any of us, and does it as well. Even the General Assembly has now a lay Vice-Moderator, and the time may be near when it will lay aside the "Vice." It is certainly necessary that all classes of believers shall be subsidized and mobilized if the world is to be won to Christ, and the trend is now in that direction.

There have been wonderful changes in all the humanitarian elements of our Christian civilization. In Foreign Missions the medical work has been almost entirely developed within the memory of some who still live. All missionary organizations are now proceeding on that rational principle taught by the word and example of Christ, namely: bearing bodily relief in one hand and the salvation of the soul in the other. In the number of medical missionaries it is a matter of just pride that our own Board is thus far in

the lead. The establishment of permanent hospitals and dispensaries has advanced in all the great mission fields, and coupled with this advance there has been a corresponding progress in the training of native physicians.

Added to the missionary efforts made along these lines many accessory influences have sprung up. In some countries, as in Japan, the Government has established hospitals, while the efforts of Lady Dufferin in India have initiated a widespread system of medical education for women, who shall go forth by the hundreds, and we hope ere long by the thousands, to relieve the sufferings of their sex. If nothing else had been accomplished in the last thirty years, the awakening of the Christian world to a noble philanthropy for the relief of the sick and the maimed would repay for all the outlay that has been made.

In connection with the relief afforded by medical mission work, mention may be made of the ameliorations of modern warfare. In some respects wars are more decisive and perhaps more bloody than ever before, but wanton cruelty toward the conquered, or cold indifference and neglect toward the wounded and dying, are no longer factors. The Red Cross movement, which has enlisted the noble philanthropy of so many American and European women, the concessions of all armies made in favor of the angels of mercy who visit the battlefields between the hostile lines for the relief of the wounded and dying—these present a grand and inspiring spectacle—these, too, are the results of Christian sympathy and the increase of a helpful spirit the world over.

Again this generation has been distinguished by frequent and widespread systems of famine relief. In the last thirty years

Christian churches of America and of Europe have again and again been called upon for the relief of starving ones in China, Armenia and other parts of Turkey, and especially of late in India. The hearts of all humane people, Christian or otherwise, have been touched by the appalling revelations of want and the slow, wasting death of the famished in India and other lands less favored than ours; and inadequate as the relief may have been, a spontaneous movement of kindness and charity has been witnessed. Coupled with this relief of the starving, orphanages have been established everywhere in the track of this wholesale devastation. The sentiment of sympathy on the part of the prosperous and well-to-do for their destitute and suffering fellow-men has everywhere been developed and strengthened. None need to be reminded of the fact that the impelling force in all these manifold developments of philanthropy has sprung from the enterprise of Christian missions. Missionaries have brought the world together by their appeals, by the masses of facts which have been gathered, for example, by such writers as Dr. Dennis. The recent General Assembly illustrated the interest created by the revelations made by eloquent missionaries before great convocations of Christian people.

It is a proof of the influence of missionary example in these respects that governments are now taking an interest in philanthropic relief which was not witnessed in past generations. How inspiring were the references made in a recent address in Carnegie Hall by the President of the United States of our disinterested emancipation of Cuba and the prompt action of our national Congress for the relief of the sufferers in Martinique and

St. Vincent! In the centuries past the West Indies have slumbered on in neglect, often visited by pestilences, often devastated by bloody massacres and constantly oppressed by Spanish misgovernment, yet it was scarcely thought that our people should do anything to afford relief. But a point has now been reached on which the sufferings of mankind in any quarter of the globe cannot pass unheeded. A new era in diplomacy has been opened.

We have not yet reached the millenium. There are still great evils to be hunted down and extirpated. The sale of intoxicants to the ignorant and helpless islanders of the Pacific and the equally helpless tribes of West Africa; the lurking remnants of the coolie trade, which it seems almost impossible to overcome; the continued barbarities of slave-hunting in East Africa; the oppressions visited everywhere by stronger nations upon the weaker—these are yet to be overcome. But when we consider what has been done in a third of a century it is impossible not to cherish strong faith in the providence of God and in new altruistic movements of the nations.

There is an old prophecy which perhaps the Church has been too ready to regard as a mere rhetorical expression, which reads, "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness." This prediction has been finding wonderful fulfillment in our generation. This has been the period of steam navigation of the oceans, which are now all covered with invisible paths over which, in defiance of wind and wave, great steamers go forth bearing the fruits of civilization, which we are glad to believe contain the tidings of great joy. Let

us claim the promise that all these shall be the ways of holiness. It is remarkable how the prophecies subsidize all agencies and channels of traffic—the ships of Tarshish and the dromedaries of Midian—to the service of the Redeemer. The electric cable, thrilling the depths of the sea and enabling the nations to speak as it were ear to ear and in a moment, belongs in the same category. As a means of preparation, railroad lines have been opened in four or five different latitudes across this continent, all within the memory of most of those who read these words. Other lines stretch from north to south, connecting the British Dominions, the United States and Mexico. We have already alluded to the completion of a railroad in the Congo Valley, and the partial completion of a line from Egypt to Cape Colony. Perhaps the most stupendous scheme of all is that which connects Russia with Eastern Siberia, with branches extending southward to Constantinople, again to Odessa, again to Afghanistan, still again to Port Arthur, with prospects at an early day of a connection with Peking. Should a railroad connection in the coming generation connect Peking with Constantinople and Jerusalem, Cairo and Cape Town, and another extend from the British possessions to Mexico, Central America, and thence branching to Rio and Valparaiso, it would not be more wonderful than what we have witnessed in our own day.

On the human side we cannot claim these as direct highways for the chariot of redemption. The progress of Russia seems to be characterized by quite another spirit, and the greed of commerce or political aggrandizement seems to outrun the progress of the Christian motive, yet I believe that these paths

are to be the highways of Gospel progress, because it is promised, and because we know that the King of kings is greater and of more prevailing power than Emperor, or Czar, or Sultan. The providence of God has so often triumphed over human diplomacy, good has so uniformly come forth from evil, the wrath of man has in so many signal ways promoted the praise of God, and the remainder thereof has so many times been restrained, that we are confident in claiming all national and commercial advance as elements in the complete conquest of the world.

It is among the bright auspices of our time that a more charitable and truly catholic spirit has asserted itself between Christian denominations. Comity and co-operation, though they have not completed their work, have made great advance. Christian churches of different names are living in more peaceable relations toward each other. Quite recently we have struck out of our Presbyterian Creed the long standing but gratuitous condemnation of the Papal hierarchy. Perhaps many present have read a recent article in the "Outlook," entitled "The War of the Saints," in which the bitterness of religious controversy and dissension of a past generation were set forth, with quotations of the stinging vituperations and wholesale denunciation of even such men as Wesley and Toplady. I can myself recall to mind the time when language was used in religious controversy which would now be frowned upon even in political discussion. An age of courtesy and tempered speech has come. Religious bodies are being drawn more closely to each other and are recognizing the fact that the cohorts of redemption must close up their ranks for a united conquest of the great and

intrenched strongholds of heathen error.

A significant proof of the change in this respect is seen in a notable appeal made two years since by nine Anglican Bishops in India. They say: "We heartily invite our fellow Christians of all denominations to join with us for Christ's sake in the fellowship of good works and the cultivation of a cheerful and sympathetic spirit throughout the Christian world, and in united prayer for these certain ends." With regard to our relations to the millions of non Christians in India, they add, "We do not forget that we are witnesses to the faith of Christ in the midst of a non Christian population, and while we cannot afford to compromise the absolute supremacy of Christ, we yet disclaim for ourselves and we deprecate in others the intention or the right to say any word than can cause just offense in the minds of Hindus, Mohammedans or Buddhists."

Another element in the progress of our generation is seen in what we may call the convincing demonstrations of missionary success. The statistics of church membership, or education, her hospital service, though interesting and cheering, come far short of some other factors which cannot be tabulated. There are victories and achievements which no intellectual man will gainsay, such as the transformation of the entire prevailing sentiment of a nation. For example, the fact that in India the Arya Somaj, notwithstanding all its bitterness, has thrown aside many of the enormities of the old Hindu cult and has adopted the ethics of the New Testament bodily. As another example, Mr. Seder, a missionary in Japan, in speaking of the progress there made, says most truthfully that the introduction of Christianity has changed

the whole attitude of Japan from a pessimistic to an optimistic spirit; that whereas the old Buddhist religion taught men that the great thing was to get out of the world and enter into Nirvana, the religion of Christ has taught that it is better to stay in the world and help reform it.

Another very hopeful element in our present outlook is the widespread movement towards self-support of the native churches. It has been apparent for many years that the conversion of the heathen world by the present effort of foreign missionaries is an impossibility. In the main, India must convert India, and China must convert China. A Christianity worth propagating must have enough of sinew and self impelling force to carry forward the work begun by men of other lands. Yet most missions have been handicapped by their early mistakes. In the generation immediately preceding ours it had been common even to pay for the privilege of instructing children, and I can well remember when in our missions it was customary to bear nearly all expense for the employment of helpers, for the building of chapels and school buildings, and even for fuel and lights and janitor's service. It is a herculean task to escape from the bondage of old mistakes, or to arouse people from wrong habits of dependence. Nevertheless, beginnings have been made even where old errors were to be corrected, while in new missions surprising results have attended the development of self-support. In our Korea Mission marked success has been gained from the first. Thus, according to the last report of the Pyeng Yang Station, it has "one central church with 18 associated places of meeting; 179 recognized out-stations, each having from 1 to 6

meeting places, and 16 or more additional groups. The total adult membership numbers 2,944. Seven hundred and eighty-four adults were baptized on profession during the year; there are 3,837 catechumens, making a total of 11,905 adherents who are more or less regular church attendants. Of the native assistants there are 73 unsalaried local leaders and 19 helpers who travel on circuits. All but 6 helpers are supported by the people. There are 152 churches and chapel buildings, nearly all provided by the people. Forty-six have been built this year. There are 41 school-teachers, 30 of whom are supported by the people." This is characteristic of the whole Korean Mission.

At the Ecumenical Conference of 1900, Rev. Sumner R. Vinton, American Baptist missionary in Burma, reported that "in Burma there were 112 distinct Baptist churches with 6,600 members. These had been self supporting from the start. Twenty-five of the churches have ordained pastors. The bulk of the other preachers are seminary trained men, supported by the churches. Nearly all of the American money that goes to this mission is for the salary of the missionaries. Not one cent goes to the support of pastor or church. This work is so organized that the stronger churches help the weaker ones to pay their expenses. More than this, they support their own primary schools, almost every church having its school."

But perhaps the most notable development of an independent native church is to be found in Uganda. At a church congress held some months ago in England, Bishop Tucker, speaking for Uganda, said:

"Ten years ago the number of baptized Christians was something like 300. To-day it

is 30,000, an increase of exactly a hundred-fold.

“Ten years ago there was but one church—one place of Christian worship—in the whole of Uganda. To-day there are 700.

“Ten years ago there were but some twenty native evangelists at work. To-day there are some 2,000 Baganda men and women definitely engaged in the work of the church—again an increase of exactly a hundred-fold.

“Ten years ago Uganda was the only country in those regions in which the name of Christ had been proclaimed. To-day Busoga in the east, where Bishop Hannington was so cruelly done to death, has received the Gospel message, and only recently more than a thousand men and women were gathered together in our central station for the worship of the One True and Living God. Bunyoro, in the north, has in like manner been entered, and that old-time center of slave raiding and trading is fast yielding to the claims of all-conquering Christ. Toro, too, in the west, where on the borders of the Congo Free State the snow clad mountain range of Ruwenzori rears its giant crest to heaven, has also accepted the truth as it is in Jesus. And even now that infant church is sending forth her missionaries into the regions beyond.

“And who has been the instrument in all this widespread evangelistic and missionary effort? It has been the Muganda himself. The Church of Uganda is a self-extending Church, because from the very beginning, the plan which has been adopted has been that of laying upon each individual convert the responsibility of handing on that truth which he himself has received, and which has made him ‘wise unto salvation.’ Nor is this all. The churches and schools of the coun-

try, some 700 in number, are built, repaired and maintained by the natives themselves. In one word, the whole work of the Native Church—its educational, pastoral and missionary work—is maintained entirely from native sources. Not one single halfpenny of English money is employed in its maintenance.”

These are incontestable testimonies which no advocate of the old methods can gainsay, and they are full of promise of what the churches of heathen lands everywhere may yet do for the millions of their own races.

One more sign of promise I may add before closing, and that is an awakened attention on all hands to a widespread, more earnest and more hopeful effort to gather in the masses of the unsaved, and to do it now. There has been a great change in this respect. There is an advance among our home churches; evangelistic movements for the ingathering of the impenitent have come to occupy a larger place than ever before, and in some mission fields the same movement has begun. There are not as many missionaries as there were formerly who say, “We have nothing to do with results; we are simply to preach the Gospel, whether men hear or whether they forbear.” There is a feeling abroad that we are probably on the eve of a great Pentecostal ingathering in our mission fields. In Japan foretastes of such a blessing have already been experienced, and the missionaries in Japan are asking for a special evangelist to preach directly and searchingly to educated Japanese students and other educated men in the hope that multitudes of them will be led to accept Christ at once. Such indeed was the case not many months ago during the visit and the labors of Mr. John R. Mott. There have been repeated

instances which show that great success may be near.

In closing this paper I cannot overlook one fact which casts its shadow upon all that has been said, and that is, the inadequacy of the work of the past generation in comparison with what should have been done. We have had much to be thankful for, but why has not the Gospel been given to all men according to the means which God has given to His Church? Surely to each generation of Christian men and women is assigned the duty of evangelizing those who live while *they* live, and will die when they die. Christian ambassadors of the past cannot do this, they of the future cannot do it. We must remember that mankind are a passing throng. The other day I saw a regiment of soldiers march down Broadway separated and spaced by companies. Even so God is marching the unblessed millions across this earth in battalions of a generation each, and to the believers of each period the Great Commission is given afresh.

We easily fall into the idea that the world has been the same all the time. It is not the same. You who now go forth in youth to do your part are confronted by a different world from that to which missionaries went forth forty years ago. These solemn facts add their emphasis to what has been said of the duty of urging the masses of men to accept the Gospel now.

I have spoken of the generation in which my lifework has been spent. What shall be said years hence of that in which you now begin your labors? Has not the time come indeed, after so slow a pace and so many delays, for a general movement all along the line, at home and abroad? God grant that this may be so, and may He bestow upon each of you

the divine equipment of which Paul speaks as "the armor of God."

I am impressed with the fact that when I bid you good bye it is for the last time. My colleagues, I trust, will meet you as you return from your furloughs. *I shall not.* But I can assure you of my earnest prayers that He who ever liveth may be with you to the end, and that His grace may be sufficient for you.